

THE CIRCULAR STAIRCASE

BY MARY ROBERTS RINEHART
ILLUSTRATIONS BY
RAY WALTERS

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CHAPTER IX.

Just Like a Girl.

"Aunt Ray!" Halsey said from the gloom behind the lamp. "What in the world are you doing here?"

"Taking a walk," I said, trying to be composed. I don't think the answer struck either of us as being ridiculous at the time. "Oh, Halsey, where have you been?"

"Let me take you up to the house." He was in the road, and had Beulah and the basket out of my arms in a moment. I could see the car plainly now, and Warner was at the wheel—Warner in an ulster and a pair of slippers, over heaven knows what. Jack Bailey was not there. I got in, and we went slowly and painfully up to the house.

We did not talk. What we had to say was too important to commence there, and, besides, it took all kinds of coaxing from both men to get the Dragon Fly up the last grade. Only when we had closed the front door and stood facing each other in the hall did Halsey say anything. He slipped his strong young arm around my shoulders and turned me so I faced the light.

"Poor Aunt Ray!" he said gently. And I nearly wept again. "I—I must see Gertrude, too; we will have a three-cornered talk."

And then Gertrude herself came down the stairs. She had not been to bed evidently; she still wore the white negligee she had worn earlier in the evening, and she limped somewhat. During her slow progress down the stairs I had time to notice one thing: Mr. Jamieson had said the woman who escaped from the cellar had worn no shoe on her right foot. Gertrude's right ankle was the one who had sprained!

The meeting between brother and sister was tense, but without tears. Halsey kissed her tenderly, and I noticed evidences of strain and anxiety in both young faces.

"Is everything right?" she asked. "Right as can be," with forced cheerfulness.

I lighted the living room and we went in there. Only a half-hour before I had sat with Mr. Jamieson in that very room, listening while he overtly accused both Gertrude and Halsey of at least a knowledge of the death of Arnold Armstrong. Now Halsey was here to speak for himself; I should learn everything that had puzzled me.

"I saw it in the paper to-night for the first time," he was saying. "It knocked me dumb. When I think of



They Stared at Each Other Across the Big Library Table.

this houseful of women, and a thing like that occurring!"

Gertrude's face was still set and white. "That isn't all, Halsey," she said. "You—and Jack left almost at the time it happened. The detective here thinks that you—that we—know something about it."

"The devil he does!" Halsey's eyes were fairly starting from his head. "I beg your pardon, Aunt Ray, but—the fellow's a lunatic."

"Tell me everything, won't you, Halsey?" I begged. "Tell me where you went that night, or rather morning, and why you went as you did. This has been a terrible 48 hours for all of us."

He stood staring at me, and I could see the horror of the situation dawning in his face.

"I can't tell you where I went, Aunt Ray," he said after a moment. "As to why, you will learn that soon enough. But Gertrude knows that Jack and I left the house before this thing—this horrible murder—occurred."

"Mr. Jamieson does not believe," Gertrude said drearily. "Halsey, if the worst comes, if they should arrest you, you must—tell."

"I shall tell nothing," he said with a new sternness in his voice. "Aunt Ray, it was necessary for Jack and me to leave that night. I cannot tell you why—just yet. As to where we went, if I have to depend on that as an alibi, I shall not tell. The whole thing is an absurdity, a trumped-up charge that cannot possibly be serious."

"H—Mr. Bailey gone back to the city,"

"Neither," defiantly, "at the present moment I do not know where he is."

"Halsey," I asked gravely, leaning forward, "have you the slightest suspicion who killed Arnold Armstrong?" The police think he was admitted from within, and that he was shot down from above, by some one on the circular staircase."

"I know nothing of it," he maintained; but I fancied I caught a sudden glance at Gertrude, a flash of something that died as it came.

As quietly, as calmly as I could, I went over the whole story, from the night Liddy and I had been alone up to the strange experience of Rosie and her pursuer. The basket still stood on the table, a mute witness to this last mysterious occurrence.

"There is something else," I said hesitatingly, at the last. "Halsey, I have never told this even to Gertrude, but the morning after the crime I found, in a tulip bed, a revolver. It—it was yours, Halsey."

For an appreciable moment Halsey stared at me. Then he turned to Gertrude.

"My revolver, Trude!" he exclaimed. "Why, Jack took my revolver with him, didn't he?"

"Oh, for heaven's sake don't say that," I implored. "The detective thinks possibly Jack Bailey came back, and—and the thing happened then."

"He didn't come back," Halsey said sternly. "Gertrude, when you brought down a revolver that night for Jack to take with him, what one did you bring? Mine?"

Gertrude was defiant now. "No. Yours was loaded, and I was afraid of what Jack—might do. I gave him one I have had for a year or two. It was empty."

Halsey threw up both hands despairingly.

"If that isn't like a girl!" he said. "Why didn't you do what I asked you to, Gertrude? You send Bailey off with an empty gun, and throw mine in a tulip bed, of all places on earth! Mine was a 38 caliber. The inquest will show, of course, that the bullet that killed Armstrong was a 38. Then where shall I be?"

"You forget," I broke in, "that I have the revolver, and that no one knows about it."

But Gertrude had risen angrily. "I cannot stand it; it is always with me," she cried. "Halsey, I did not throw your revolver into the tulip bed. I think—you—did—it—yourself!"

They stared at each other across the big library table, with young eyes all at once hard, suspicious. And then Gertrude held out both hands to him appealingly.

"We must not," she said brokenly. "Just now, with so much at stake, it—is shameful. I know you are as ignorant as I am. Make me believe it, Halsey."

Halsey soothed her as best he could, and the breach seemed healed. But long after I went to bed he sat downstairs in the living room alone, and I knew he was going over the case as he had learned it. Some things were clear to him that were dark to me. He knew, and Gertrude, too, why Jack Bailey and he had gone away that night, and why Jack Bailey had not returned with him. It seemed to me that without fuller confidence from both the children—they are always children to me—I should never be able to learn anything.

As I was finally getting ready for bed, Halsey came upstairs and knocked at my door. When I had got into a negligee—I used to say wrapper before Gertrude came back from school—I let him in. He stood in the doorway a moment, and then he went into agonies of silent mirth. I sat down on the side of the bed and waited in severe silence for him to stop, but he only seemed to grow worse. When he had recovered he took me by the elbow and pulled me in front of the mirror.

"How to be beautiful," he quoted. "Advice to maids and matrons, by Beatrice Fairfax!" And then I saw myself. I had neglected to remove my wrinkle eradicators, and I presume my appearance was odd. I believe that it is a woman's duty to care for her looks, but it is much like telling a necessary falsehood—one must not be found out. By the time I got them off Halsey was serious again, and I listened to his story.

"Aunt Ray," he began, extinguishing his cigarette on the back of my ivory hair-brush, "I would give a lot to tell you the whole thing. But—I can't, for a day or so, anyhow. But one thing I might have told you a long time ago. If you had known it, you would not have suspected me for a moment of—of having anything to do with the attack on Arnold Armstrong. Goodness knows what I might do to a fellow like that, if there was enough provocation, and I had a gun in my hand—under ordinary circumstances. But I care a great deal about Louise Armstrong, Aunt Ray. I hope to marry her some day. Is it likely I would kill her brother?"

"But the whole thing is absurd," I argued. "And besides, Gertrude's

sworn statement that you left before Arnold Armstrong came would clear you at once."

Halsey got up and began to pace the room, and the air of cheerfulness dropped like a mask.

"She can't swear it," he said finally. "Gertrude's story was true as far as it went, but she didn't tell everything. Arnold Armstrong came here at 2:30—came into the billiard room and left in five minutes. He came to bring—something."

"Halsey," I cried, "you must tell me the whole truth. Every time I see a way for you to escape you block it yourself with this wall of mystery. What did he bring?"

"A telegram—for Bailey," he said. "It came by special messenger from town, and was—most important. Bailey had started for here, and the messenger had gone back to the city. The steward gave it to Arnold, who had been drinking all day and couldn't sleep, and was going for a stroll in the direction of Sunnyside."

"And he brought it?"

"Yes."

"What was in the telegram?"

"I can tell you—as soon as certain things are made public. It is only a matter of days now," gloomily.

"And Gertrude's story of a telephone?"

"Poor Trude!" he half whispered.

"Poor loyal little girl! Aunt Ray, there was no such message. No doubt your detective already knows that and discredits all Gertrude told him."

"And when she went back, it was to get—the telegram?"

"Probably," Halsey said slowly.

"When you got to thinking about it, Aunt Ray, it looks bad for all three of us, doesn't it? And yet—I will take my oath none of us even inadvertently killed that poor devil."

I looked at the closed door into Gertrude's dressing room, and lowered my voice.

"The same horrible thought keeps recurring to me," I whispered. "Halsey, Gertrude probably had your revolver; she must have examined it, anyhow, that night. After you—and Jack had gone, what if that ruffian came back, and she—she—"

I couldn't finish. Halsey stood looking at me with shut lips.

"She might have heard him fumbling at the door—he had no key, the police say—and thinking it was you, or Jack, she admitted him. When she saw her mistake she ran up the stairs, a step or two, and turning, like an animal at bay, she fired."

Halsey had his hand over my lips before I finished, and in that position we stared each at the other, our stricken glances crossing.

"The revolver—my revolver—thrown into the tulip bed!" he muttered to himself. "Thrown perhaps from an upper window; you say it was buried deep. Her prostration ever since, her—Aunt Ray, you don't think it was Gertrude who fell down the clothes chute?"

I could only nod my head in a hopeless affirmative.

(Continued next Friday)

Marksbury.

Pearce Huffman sold to Vic Lear a bunch of 140 pound hogs at 6 1-2 cents. Fisher Hughes bought a number of hogs for 6 1-2 cents.

Yates Hudson sold about 800 pounds of wool to Richard Foley, of Danville, for 26 1-2 cents per pound. Mr. Hudson also sold 160 lambs to some parties for 6 1-2 cents per pound.

Some of our farmers have commenced setting their tobacco plants, and with the good weather next week much of the crop will be set.

The heirs of R. M. Robinson deceased are having their residence whitewashed and things are taking on a cheerful look.

Sam Bendley, a colored man, while coming from town last week, the team which he was driving seared at a motorcycle and became unmanageable, running quite a distance. The wagon was wrecked and one of the horses falling was injured. The driver and his wife who were in the wagon were not hurt. Mr. and Mrs. Nelson-Marshall who were returning home barely escaped being run over by the frightened horses.

Rev. J. W. Mahan preached a splendid sermon last Sunday morning from the text "The Love of God Constrains Us."

We are glad to note a steady recovery of Mrs. J. W. Mahan, who is ill in the hospital at Knoxville, Tenn.

The district Sunday school convention held a meeting last Sunday afternoon with the Fork Church. Miss Eliza Isen, the president had prepared a very interesting program which was enjoyed by all present. There were a number of good speakers, but it is said that Miss Georgia Dunn won the laurels of the afternoon by the splendid speech she made before the convention. Her subject was "How to Keep the Boys in Sunday School." Miss Isen was re-elected President and Miss Christopher Treasurer.

John R. Stout, Joyce, Ky. had an exceptionally severe attack of whooping cough. He says: "If it had not been for Foley's Honey and Tar Compound I would have been compelled to quit work. Instead, I never missed a day, and Foley's Honey and Tar Compound gave me instant relief and is the only cough medicine we ever use." Contains no opiates. Shugars and Toner.

"But the whole thing is absurd," I argued. "And besides, Gertrude's

Stimulant or Tonic?

Ayer's Sarsaparilla is not a stimulant. It does not make you feel better one day, then as bad as ever the next. There is not a drop of alcohol in it. Ayer's Sarsaparilla is a tonic. You have the steady, even gain that comes from such a medicine. Ask your doctor all about this. Trust him fully, and always do as he says. He knows.

Who makes the best liver pills? The J. C. Ayer Company, of Lowell, Mass. They have been making Ayer's Pills for over sixty years. If you have the slightest doubt about using these pills, ask your doctor. Ask him first, that's best. Made by the J. C. AYER CO., Lowell, Mass.

Report of Condition of THE STATE BANK & TRUST CO.

Doing business at Stanford, County of Lincoln, State of Kentucky at the close of business on the 18th day of May, 1912.

Resources

Loans and discounts with one or more endorsers	\$60,963 27
Real estate mortgages	17,238 00
Due from National Banks	7,332 81
Overdrafts (secured)	6,647 50
Overdrafts (unsecured)	1,150 00
Current expenses paid	1,189 97
Real estate—bank house	14,528 21
Furniture and fixtures	3,982 50
TOTAL	\$114,776 92

Liabilities

Capital stock paid in cash	50,000 00
Undivided profits	2,946 75
Deposits subject to check (on which interest is not paid)	53,695 17
Deposits subject to check (on which interest is paid)	3,225 00
Certified checks	56,830 17
Notes and bills rediscounted	5,000 00
TOTAL	\$114,776 92

State of Kentucky, county of Lincoln set—

I, M. B. Salin, cashier of the above named bank, do solemnly swear that the above statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

M. B. SALIN, Cashier.
Subscribed and sworn to before me this 22nd day of May 1912, G. B. Cooper, Clerk L. C. C. Correct Attest—W. L. McCarty, Pres. J. S. Rice, V-Pres. G. D. Florence, Directors.

Blue Lick.

Special services at the New Blue Lick church Sunday May 26, at 3 P. M., by Rev. J. B. Jones, and J. C. McClary. Everybody cordially invited.

Mr. L. G. Daugherty and Mr. Lay visited friends at Green Brier.

Mrs. A. J. Daugherty visited Mrs. Nannie Woodall Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Daugherty visited Mr. and Mrs. Fred Nichols, near Danville.

Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Hasty visited Mr. and Mrs. J. Daugherty Saturday night.

Mr. Walter Manning visited Mr. James Daugherty Saturday and Sunday.

Mr. Irvin and Stanley Snowden attended Sunday school at Neal's Creek Sunday.

FOR STANFORD PEOPLE

Stanford Citizens' Experiences Furnish Topic for Stanford Discussion.

The following experience occurred in Stanford. A Stanford citizen relates it.

Similar experiences are occurring daily. Stanford people are being relieved.

Getting rid of distressing kidney ills.

Try Doan's Kidney Pills the tested Quaker remedy.

Stanford people testify. Stanford people profit.

The evidence is home evidence—the proof convincing.

Stanford testimony is gratefully given.

Stanford sufferers should heed it. W. H. Merston, Lancaster Pike, Stanford, Ky., says: I was troubled some time ago with an acute attack of kidney complaint. My back ached constantly and I had considerable pains through my loins. I felt languid at times and tired easily. I took a box of Doan's Kidney Pills and they fixed me up all right, the second box practically cured me of all the trouble."

For sale by all dealers. Price 50 cents. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, New York, sole agents for the United States.

Remember the name—Doan's—and take no other.

Brighten up your old buggy. All kinds of painting and repairing neatly done at the most reasonable prices. W. J. Romans, Lancaster.

Hustonsville.

The commencement exercises at Christian church Friday evening of the Hustonsville graded school closed the most successful year in its history. The handsome church was effectively decorated with masses of growing plants, and was filled to overflowing by an interested audience. The graduates were Ama Lee Barker, John Louis Hicks, Roger Lee Hicks and Paul Bryan Willis. The essays read by these young people were very creditable, both to themselves and their instructors, the central idea in each being the duty as well as the privilege of personal service. After the presentation of diplomas by the president of the board of trustees, Dr. Crossfield of Transylvania University addressed the class. A man of broad scholarship and large experience, he spoke convincingly of the necessity of solid educational foundations for the building of the higher citizenship. Several musical numbers were given by the pupils. The program was carefully planned, and well executed and the audience left the building realizing that the school is an honor, and a credit to the community.

Miss Elizabeth Vermillion, of Danville, was here with Mrs. Roland Bishop Sunday.

Miss Rose McFerran, of Mt. Vernon, but who taught last year at McAlister, Okla., was the attractive guest of her sister, Mrs. Dr. Childress.

Miss Ella Rigney, is visiting relatives at Stanford this week.

The base ball club will give an ice cream and strawberry supper at the Newtonian building Friday evening at 7:45. An admission of 15 cents will be charged. All are cordially invited to come.

Mr. James Elwood Weatherford arrived Sunday from Philadelphia, where he attended school last term, to make a short visit to his parents Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Weatherford.

Mr. Will Edwards, of New York was here last week visiting friends.

Mrs. McEwitt and Miss Mary D. Beck, of McKinney, were here Tuesday.

Miss Corn Mae Goode and Mr. Lee Toney spent Sunday in Danville, where they visited relatives.

Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Tate motored to Stanford Tuesday afternoon shopping.

Miss Francis McClure and Mr. Orestes Floyd of Lexington, were guests of Miss Annie Floyd, for commencement last week.

Mrs. Bettie Williams was in Stanford Tuesday, shopping.

Mrs. Bill Spalding and beautiful little daughter, Katherine Alcorn will arrive Wednesday for a visit to Dr. Edward Alcorn and family.

Miss Eddie T. Carpenter and Mr. King Carpenter were guests of Stanford relatives last week.

Messrs Josiah Bishop and R. A. Lapps were in Danville Monday shopping.

Misses Jean and Jessie McKechnie were the attractive guests of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Hammond for commencement.

Mr. Tom Huns and son, of Columbia, were here Friday with a big drove of sheep and lambs.

Mr. Clarence Alstott, of Ellisburg was here last week.

Mr. Joseph W. Route was in Danville Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ware, of Danville, motored to this city Tuesday and were guests at Mr. and Mrs. Josiah Bishop's.

Mr. and Mrs. Jason Taylor and son James Mitchell, of Danville visited Mr. and Mrs. C. R. McCormack last week.

Misses Bishop and Moser of near Moreland were here shopping Friday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Mitchell and Miss Lucie Mitchell, of Danville, were with Prof. and Mrs. S. S. Robinson for commencement.

Messrs Bona McKechnie and Thurman Tudor were here Friday evening.

Miss Florence Spragens, visited Miss Blanche Barnett Friday.

Some of the out-of-town people who attended commencement were Mr. and Mrs. Geo. B. Pruitt and children, Olga Weddel, Miss Hanson, of Moreland, Mr. Frank Bobbitt and Miss Cora Nunneley, of Peyton's Well section, Mr. Will McCormack, and Ed Davis and Mr. Goff, of Columbia.

Mr. J. P. Goode is home from London, where he has been serving on the jury.

The many friends of Miss Rose Yowell are pleased to see her home again after a six weeks stay with the temperance people a Lebanon in their whisky fight. Miss Yowell is such a good worker, we don't like to be long without her presence and help.

J. W. Jordan, a well known dentist of Hopkinsville, Ky., recently had an operation for his kidney trouble, but he says: "The first real relief I got was after taking Foley Kidney Pills. They eased the terrible pain in my back and accomplished more good than anything I had tried. I gladly recommend them." Shugars and Tanner.

Wanted.—50 men and boys to strip blue grass seed, strippers furnished at \$2.50 each. Payment taken in seed. W. S. Fish and W. T. Alexander, Stanford, Ky. 40-3t.

Before Allowing an Operation

Please Read These Two Letters.

The following letter from Mrs. Orville Rock will prove how unwise it is for women to submit to the dangers of a surgical operation when it may be avoided by taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. She was four weeks in the hospital and came home suffering worse than before. Then after all that suffering Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound restored her health.

HERE IS HER OWN STATEMENT.

Paw Paw, Mich.—"Two years ago I suffered very severely with a displacement—I could not be on my feet for a long time. My physician treated me for several months without much relief, and at last sent me to Ann Arbor for an operation. I was there four weeks and came home suffering worse than before. My mother advised me to try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and I did. To-day I am well and strong and do all my own housework. I owe my health to Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and advise every woman who is afflicted with any female complaint to try it."—Mrs. ORVILLE ROCK, R. R. No. 3, Paw Paw, Mich.



"THERE NEVER WAS A WORSE CASE."

Rockport, Ind.—"There never was a worse case of women's ills than mine, and I cannot begin to tell you what I suffered. For over two years I was not able to do anything. I was in bed for a month and the doctor said nothing but an operation would cure me. My father suggested Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound; so to please him I took it, and I improved wonderfully, so I am able to travel, ride horseback, take long rides and never feel any ill effects from it. I can only ask other suffering women to give Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound a trial before submitting to an operation."—Mrs. MARGARET MEREDITH, R. F. D. No. 3, Rockport, Ind.

We will pay a handsome reward to any person who will prove to us that these letters are not genuine and truthful—or that either of these women were paid in any way for their testimonials, or that the original letter from each did not come to us entirely unsolicited.

For 30 years Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has been the standard remedy for female ills. No one sick with woman's ailments does justice to herself who will not try this famous medicine, made from roots and herbs, it has restored so many suffering women to health.

Write to LYDIA E. PINKHAM MEDICINE CO. (CONFIDENTIAL) LYNN, MASS., for advice. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman in strict confidence.



Burglars may visit you any night

Prepare for them today by putting all your valuables in our safety deposit vaults.

Absolute safety against fire, thieves or any other calamity. Access to our vaults at any time. Safety boxes free to our customers. Come in and let us show you around.

STATE BANK & TRUST CO.,

Stanford, Ky.

Capital \$50,000. Deposits \$69,897.81. Surplus \$4,181.43

W. L. McCARTY, Pres. J. D. EADS, V-Pres.
G. L. PENNY, V. Pres. J. S. RICE, V. Pres.
M. B. SALIN, Cashier. S. ALBERT PHILLIPS, A-Cash'r

SPECIAL EXCURSION CINCINNATI AND RETURN Sunday, June 2nd.

\$1.50 Round Trip QUEEN & CRESCENT ROUTE \$1.50 Round Trip

SPECIAL TRAIN Lvs. JUNCTION CITY 5:35 a.m. AS